



CONGRESSMAN CURT WELDON

7th District Pennsylvania



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**STATEMENT OF HONORABLE CURT WELDON
CHAIRMAN, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE
JOINT SESSION OF THE RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT AND MILITARY
PROCUREMENT SUBCOMMITTEES
DOD MODERNIZATION HEARING**

February 26, 1998

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This afternoon we will hold a joint hearing of the R&D and Procurement Subcommittees to examine Department of Defense modernization plans in the fiscal year 1999 defense budget request. As we did last year, my good friend Duncan Hunter and I plan to share the chair while holding a series of joint hearings of these two subcommittees during the coming weeks. My ranking member and good friend Owen Pickett and I look forward to working with the Chairman of the Procurement Subcommittee and his ranking member and good friend Norman Sisisky, and the rest of our colleagues on the Procurement Subcommittee.

The purpose of today's hearing will be to examine a broad range of modernization programs and initiatives which fall within the direct responsibility of OSD leadership.

Last year, these two subcommittees held a number of hearings covering a variety of important topics, and worked during conference with the Senate to establish with legislation and funding adjustments to address many of the issues we identified. Because of limitations imposed by this years mark-up schedule and busy calendar of committee activities, we will not have the opportunity to hold a number of single-topic hearings.

Today, appearing before our two subcommittees, we are pleased to have Dr. Jacques Gansler, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology. He is accompanied by Lieutenant General Campbell from the office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and (TBD).

While this committee addressed a number of major issues in the defense budget request last year, we note that the FY 99 budget is Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen's first budget and that it contains a number of important changes such as QDR adjustments and increases to modernization shortfall areas such as BMD programs and ending the procurement holiday. While the FY 99 budget request shows signs of finally increasing emphasis on correcting the disturbing 13-year decline in defense modernization, we still note that defense research and development is projected to decline by 14% over the next five years.

I want to point out to all the members that today's hearing will be followed by at least three more joint sessions to focus on each of the three service modernization programs and that we should take advantage of Dr. Gansler today to address those programs and issues that OSD is directly responsible for.